

Taking Environmental Protection to the Next Level: An Assessment of the U.S. Environmental Services Delivery System

Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations

Geographic location or area of activity: National study, with a case study focusing on the Chesapeake Bay Program

Description of activity: A 2007 report by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), "Taking Environmental Protection to the Next Level: An Assessment of the U.S. Environmental Services Delivery System," highlights challenges in meeting environmental goals where a wide array of federal, state and local governments must work together and success depends on both regulatory and voluntary actions. NAPA offers recommendations for strengthening EPA's role as a partnering agency, accelerating progress in cleaning up impaired waters, improving performance management systems, and implementing innovative approaches to environmental protection.

The report is the product of a three-year study requested by the Office of Management and Budget and authorized by Congress in EPA's 2004 budget. NAPA used an in-depth case study of Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts and less detailed reviews of several other environmental programs to identify broader lessons for improving environmental protection efforts. To help develop its recommendations, NAPA consulted with leaders from EPA, other federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations and the business community.

NAPA's insights regarding the challenges of building effective intergovernmental and private sector networks in the water quality arena are relevant to solving other environmental problems on a regional basis and may also have value to those working to address complex problems outside the environmental arena. The logic models and analytic tools NAPA developed for this project provide a useful framework that can be adapted to other complex efforts involving multiple partners and a mix of regulatory and voluntary tools.

Interagency partners: Chesapeake Bay partners include multiple federal agencies (e.g., EPA, Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Interior, Transportation); states (MD, VA, DC, DE, NY, WV)

Local partners: County and city governments in six states; regional councils; universities, and multiple community and environmental organizations

Activity URL: <http://www.napawash.org/resources/morenews.html>